

The Director



Washington, D. C. 20505

OLC 77-1429/b

Executive Registry

77-997/A

18 JUL 1977

3 Congress

Honorable Paul G. Rogers, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Health and the  
Environment  
Committee on Interstate and Foreign  
Commerce  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is in response to your letter of 8 April 1977 concerning legislation which would establish safety procedures under which all recombinant DNA research and technology would be required to be conducted. Specifically, you inquired whether the Central Intelligence Agency has any interest in recombinant DNA research, and, if so, what our interests are.

The CIA does have a scientific intelligence interest in monitoring the state-of-the-art of foreign recombinant DNA technology and assessing the use of that technology by foreign governments. Our "observer" interest covers the spectrum of potential applications and extends to the impact that such applications might have on foreign national policies and international relationships. For example, application of DNA technology to crop seed or farm animals could affect a nation's food production and capability thereby influencing economic and political policies and relationships.

Since we do not now support nor do we plan to support, either directly or indirectly, any research or development involving recombinant DNA but will only monitor and assess activities of others, we have no position on procedures to be incorporated into future legislation in this field.

For the same reasons, I feel that it would be inappropriate for the CIA to be represented on the Federal Interagency Committee.

*William A. Austin*  
*Long*

The Office of Management and Budget has no objection to the submission of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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Remarks:

Develop appropriate response for DCI signature.

*[Signature]*

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Subcommittee on Health and the Environment  
of the  
Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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April 8, 1977

Admiral Stansfield Turner  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Admiral Turner:

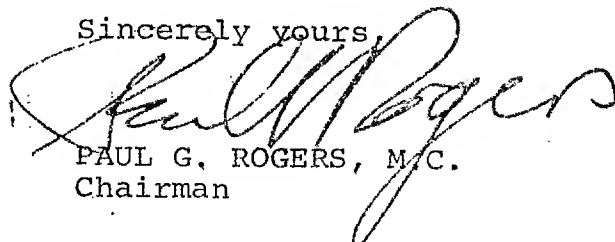
As you may know, Congress is currently considering legislation which would establish safety procedures under which all recombinant DNA research and technology would be required to be conducted. Since I note that the Central Intelligence Agency was not represented on the Federal Interagency Committee which recently considered regulatory and legislative alternatives, I would like to ask you at this time whether or not the CIA has any interest in this novel gene-splicing technology, and, if so, what those interests are.

Specifically, is the CIA now supporting or does it plan to support, either directly or indirectly, any research or development involving recombinant DNA? Does the CIA have a position concerning the direction which future legislation in this area should take? These questions arose at the recent legislative hearings on recombinant DNA held by the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. I am certain that your response will be most helpful to the Subcommittee.

On behalf of myself and the other members of the Subcommittee, please allow me to thank you in advance for your time and attention to this request.

Kind regards.

Sincerely yours,



PAUL G. ROGERS, M.C.  
Chairman